

1815 MEATHUR

DRAWER 3

YOUTH - INDIANA

71 2009.085 03425



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Friends of The Lincoln Collection of Indiana, Inc.

<http://archive.org/details/abrahamlixxx00linc>

Abraham Lincoln before 1860

Weather in 1816

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

by Irving Wallace, David Wallechinsky and Amy Wallace

Jesse James: Publicity Enemy No. 1

The Wild West was a tough place to make a living, but Jesse James knew little show business couldn't hurt.

On Jan. 31, 1874, the James gang robbed the St. Louis & Texas express train as it was passing through Gads Hill, Mo. One gang member handed the conductor an envelope containing a brazen press release signed Ira A. Merrill. It read:

THE MOST DARING TRAIN ROBBERY ON RECORD!

The southbound train of the Iron Mountain Railroad was stopped here this evening by five [there were 10] heavily armed men and robbed of \$10,000 dollars. The robbers arrived at the station a few minutes before the arrival of the train and arrested the agent and put him under guard and then threw the train on the switch. The robbers were all large men, all being slightly under six feet. After robbing the train they started in a southerly direction. They were all mounted on handsome horses.

P.S. There is a hell of an excitement in this part of the country.

The newspapers ran the press release the next day. Naturally, the James gang did not head "southerly"—it went westerly.



Bettmann Archive

Outlaw and press agent Jesse James



Lord Cornbury flaunts his finery before unappreciative New Yorkers

The Transvestite Governor

In 1702, Queen Anne of England gave Lord Cornbury, her spendthrift cousin, a choice: Either go to debtor's prison or become governor of Colonial New York and New Jersey. Off to the Colonies he went.

Asserting that he wanted to literally represent the queen, Cornbury was usually seen about town wearing the most elegant dresses. The well-groomed transvestite governor shocked his constituents from the beginning. Addressing one assembly, he resisted speaking of politics and instead delivered an ode to the beauty of his wife's ears. Each gentleman present was then invited to feel their shell-like contours. During his tenure, Cornbury could also be seen sneaking up behind unsuspecting men and pulling their ears.

As a governor, Lord Cornbury was

a disaster. Nonpartisan corruption flourished as he freely took bribes from all sides in political disagreements. At home, he wine and dined extravagantly and ignored the debts piling up. His finery must have cost a fortune, although some of the gowns were gifts from the queen herself.

Finally, the colonists could tolerate no more and complained to Queen Anne about this "peculiar, detestable maggot." She obligingly removed him from office in December 1708, whereupon he was immediately seized by his irate creditors. In jail, Cornbury was saved when his father died, leaving him the earldom of Clarendon—and thus immunity to prosecution. With debts unpaid, he returned to England and a comfortable political career, courtesy of the queen.

The Year Without a Summer

In 1816, there was no summer. Across Northern Europe and the eastern U.S., daytime temperatures rarely reached 50°F. A June 6 blizzard dumped 10 inches of snow on parts of New England. And it was all because of a volcano on the other side of the world.

On April 5, 1815, one of history's greatest volcanic eruptions rocked Sumatra, in what is now Indonesia. The uppermost 4000 feet of Mount Tambora exploded, ripping a 7-mile-wide crater in the peak and killing 12,000. The blast was 13 times stronger than the

Mount St. Helens eruption.

A massive cloud of volcanic dust worked its way around the world and, by the following summer, lay suspended over the Northern Hemisphere, deflecting the sun's radiation. At night, the mercury often dipped below freezing. On July 4, the high temperature in normally sultry Savannah, Ga., was 46°F. Frost, snow, sleet and ice caused crop failures as far west as Illinois, and many people died of wintertime illnesses. It was one summer when the living was hardly easy.

When H U.S. Sup

During the Vietnam War, the U.S. No. 1 enemy was the North Vietnamese. But only two decades earlier, the U.S. heartily supported the French and his Red followers.

At the end of World War II, the U.S. maintained a status quo line and opposed France to reestablish sovereignty in Indochina. The French also were the Vietminh, the Marxists led by Ho Chi Minh. General Douglas MacArthur, a U.S. adviser, arrived in Vietnam in 1945 and established rapport with Ho. His presence in Hanoi that October was broadcast over Vietminh Radio.

Within weeks of the end of the war, Washington switched sides. When Vietminh fell from power, the U.S. never returned to a reminder of that day. The Vietnam War endures. The Vietnam Declaration of Independence, 1945, begins: "All men are equal. They are endowed with certain unalienable rights, among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

U.S. Declaration of Independence

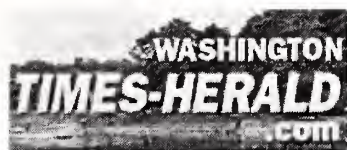


General Gallagher

INVITATION TO O

Do you know an unusu-
fica? If so, please send
exact source of your
we don't already have
it, we will send you \$
ward to reading any
Because of the volu-
cannot reply to your
your material. But tha
Significa, Parade, 750
York, N.Y. 10017.

© 1982, Irving Wallace, David Wallechinsky



March 8, 2011

Search

Article search...

Go

Weather of 1816 -- a year to remember **(<http://washtimesherald.com/local/x977543433/Weather-of-1816-a-year-to-remember>)**

By Don Cosby

Washington Times-Herald (<http://washtimesherald.com>)

WASHINGTON — It seems that every time the weather takes a turn for the worse or — for that matter — for the better, it suddenly becomes a favorite topic of discussion.

Many of us can recall the blizzard of 1978 and numerous severely cold winter days in past years. This year will be remembered for years to come as the year that we had seven snow storms in January.

Record Highs and Lows

Several have asked me if I knew what the coldest day on record was or the hottest.

Here, once again, I need to be extremely careful, for I may have someone who will challenge me on the numbers. I will only say that "as far as I have ever been able to find out," the coldest day locally recorded occurred Feb. 19, 1899, at 19 below zero. On that same day however Evansville reported -21 and Linton -23 below for the Indiana record low. Numerous dates throughout history have recorded -13, -14, -16 and as I recall, -17 was recorded locally around the mid 1960s.

The blizzard of 1917 and 1918 also recorded a minus 17 degree and was thought to be the coldest until checking old local weather observer records and finding the 1899 recorded low.

In July 1936, 110 degrees was recorded and July that year sets a record for sustained heat at 11 consecutive days in excess of 100 degrees.

The record hottest day locally, however, was on July 28, 1930, when the temperature of 113 was recorded as the high for that day.

Now, the next time it gets colder than 19 below or hotter than 113, bear in mind that in 1899 people only had fireplaces and stoves to keep warm. Likewise, the next time the mercury exceeds 113, remember those poor souls in 1930 had never ever heard of air conditioners. Count your blessings for modern-day conveniences.

Like many others, I often wondered how far back local meteorological records were kept and who kept records of such things. It appears that Charles C. Feagans was the local weather observer starting in June 1911 until he resigned in September 1964. Feagans served for more than 64 years as a director of First Federal Savings and Loan Association. In 1962, he received the "Thomas Jefferson Award" for his five decades of service as a volunteer weather observer in Washington, Ind. He was cited by the Department of Commerce for accurate and neat recording of the weather and his prompt forwarding data to the federal government of this information. Feagans was also a retired postal employee. After he died in 1965, at the age of 90, Lowell Green, also a letter carrier at the local Post Office, kept records of local weather events. These local observations date back to 1896.



Don Cosby

A year without a summer

Although no documented local records of weather existed in 1816, the summer of 1816 is without question a memorable year, not only locally, but world wide. The year of 1816 is referred to as "the year without a summer."

In 1961, Frank L. Hartle of Indianapolis was in possession of an 1816 newspaper article describing 1816 as being the coldest summer ever experienced by any person living at that time.

The following are excerpts from the article:

"June was described as the coldest month vegetation had ever experienced in this latitude. Frost and ice was as common as buttercups usually are in June."

"Mothers made thick mittens for their children and they wore knitted sox of double thickness. Overcoats and gloves were required by farmers as they attempted to do their daily chores."

"A heavy snowfall on June 17, 1816, was accompanied by a pathetic story. A Vermont farmer turned his sheep to pasture the previous day. Temperatures dropped below freezing over night and snow had begun falling about 9 a.m."

As the farmer left home, he jokingly remarked to his wife: "Better start the neighbors searching soon for me."

"It's the middle of June you know and I may get lost in the snow." Snow continued to fall in torrents and drifts began to form. By night fall nothing had been heard from him. The wife summoned neighbors and they began to search for him. They continued searching the second day. Only after the third day, was he found lying in a hollow, half-covered with snow, still alive but both feet frozen. The sheep were found nearby, but most of the flock of sheep had lost their lives.

July offered no respite. Ice thicker than window glass required breaking the ice in the livestock water troughs so they could drink.

But to everyone's surprise August proved worst of all.

"Almost every green thing in the country and Europe was blasted daily by frost. Snow fell in August in London, England. In Quebec City, Canada, on June 10, 1816, they experienced a 12-inch snowfall and 1816 was the coldest year in the northern hemisphere on record.

As a result of these abnormal summer temperatures, parts of Europe experienced a stormier winter in 1816. That, in turn, resulted in the widespread death of much of the livestock.

Cool temperatures and heavy rains resulted in failed harvests in Great Britain and Ireland. Families in Wales traveled long distances as refugees begging for food. Famine was prevalent in North and South West Ireland following the failure of their wheat, oats and potato harvests. Violent demonstrations in front of grain markets and bakeries, followed by riots, arson and looting in many European cities due to food shortages and skyrocketing food prices.

Worldwide, no living person at that time had any recollection of weather creating such havoc throughout history. While it was known that other countries were also experiencing similar weather problems, the actual cause wasn't known until years later.

A cause is found

Virtually no one in Daviess County, Ind., had ever heard of Indonesia or the small island of Sumatra nor had they any knowledge of Mount Tambora nor would they ever have believed that a volcano half way around the world could have any effect on their lives, especially their weather.

If asked, at the time, if they knew that there was a volcano eruption on Mount Tambora in Indonesia; their answer would probably be, "So who cares?" The science of climate and the factors which contribute to temperatures, the seasons, the air currents and ocean tides were not a part of common knowledge. In fact, if someone were to have suggested that a volcano was to be blamed, even the highly educated in 1816 would label us as a "fruitcake."

To believe the cause of 12-inch snowfalls in June or world widespread crop failures were a direct result of a volcano in



Indonesia would have been truly unbelievable.

Although there are several volcanoes today capable of eruption, the April 1815 Mount Tambora eruption was the largest volcanic eruption in recorded history. The explosion was deafening and was heard on the island of Sumatra more than 1,200 miles away. The estimated death toll exceeded 71,000 people. A team of archaeologists during excavation diggings in 2004 discovered cultural remains buried from the Mount Tambora volcanic explosion still intact beneath 9.9 foot deep pyroclastic lava deposits. Many of the bodies were preserved in the positions they occupied on that fateful day in 1815.

Today, we are aware of the possible effects of such a volcanic eruption and while the May 18, 1980, eruption of the Mt. Helen's volcano in Washington State was a traumatic event for this country. The effects of Mt. Helen's compared to the Mt. Tambora eruption was miniscule for Canada and the United States were mostly affected.

Most of us will remember the Mount Helen's 1980 eruption as being the most destructive volcanic event in the history of the United States. Fifty-seven people lost their lives, however the United States and Canada, were more affected than other countries. It was also responsible for the destruction of 47 bridges, 15 miles of railways, 185 miles of highways and massive debris, an avalanche, triggered by a 5.0 earthquake, along with a sudden surge of magma and molten lava from earth's mantle. A dark cloud of sulfuric ash rained down on populations for thousands of miles.

Although scientists can't give us absolute assurance that mankind will never experience a similar seismic volcano eruption, one of the magnitude of the Tambora event is highly unlikely.

Forest Fires, Floods and Prevailing Winds

It is somewhat difficult for us to realize just how often stories that make the headlines are actually weather connected. Weather events have caused or contributed to catastrophic events at numerous times throughout history. Nearly every year dry conditions in the western states and lightning spawned from violent electrical thunderstorms ignite forest fires which in turn results in the destruction of millions of dollars in the burning of homes and timber. The winds of the dust bowl of the 1930s, which resulted in the mass migration and untold hardship of millions of people from Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and other Plain States, is also a perfect example of the traumatic effects of weather upon certain communities.

1913 Flood and Local Disaster

Numerous winter snowstorms in mountainous areas cause torrents of melting snows in the spring. If this occurs in conjunction with the spring rains, suddenly floods can prove to be a logistical nightmare and financial hardship for some communities. The year 1913 was such a year. In the winter there were several late snowstorms and early spring rains in the west and central parts of the country. As a result, 1913 saw widespread flooding along the Ohio, Wabash and White rivers through out the Midwest.

In a 36-hour period, on March 24 and March 25, Charles C. Feagans, local weather observer reported over 6.68 inches of rain had fallen locally. The Washington Democrat reported the West fork of White River was 5 miles wide in places and still rising. Flooding was considered eminent. The next day 8 inches of water was reported in the engine room at the pumping station on the banks of West fork and authorities encouraged residents to fill containers with water, as well as bath tubs, for in a matter of a few hours the entire city was expected to be denied their water supply due to the pumping station equipment failure.

All available B&O employees were ordered to report for work since the river was already flowing over the tracks at "Blue Hole" west of Washington, Ind.

This was not the first time the B&O railroad had to deal with flooding between Washington and Vincennes. The "Blue Hole" trestle was created as an after effect of the great flood of 1875. The 1913 flood, however, was as history has proven far more memorable since it resulted in the drowning of four local B&O railroad men, Daniel Shaffer, Clifford McLemore, Reason Jackson and Theodore Gharst.

The story of the "Blue Hole" disaster is far too important an event to relegate it to a few short paragraphs. I simply would encourage anyone interested to read Volume II of Rex Myers's Daviess County History or the book titled "The Legend of the Blue Hole" by Roy Wachter, which can be found at the local public Library. The book can also be purchased at the Daviess County Museum for \$5.

The Locust Plague of 1875

In the aftermath of the locust plague of 1875, many people after suffering through these trying times began to ask, "What have we done to deserve such times as this?" Those who had been raised in Christian homes could readily remember that in the book of Exodus, chapter 10, verse 5, it speaks of God bringing plagues of locusts upon the people of Egypt as punishment. While this was without doubt the case in Moses' times, it was believed in 1875, that weather conditions played a very big part in the locust descending upon large segments of the United States at that time.

The Rocky Mountain locust or grasshoppers suddenly appeared by the billions appearing to nearly block out the sun in massive dark clouds appearing on the horizons across the Great Plains area from Manitoba to Texas, from the Rockies to the Mississippi. So massive was their numbers they virtually ravaged the western states for four successive summers and then, without so much as a wave of their antennae they mysteriously vanished. The locust plague of that time stands unrivaled in the annals of history of the North American Continent.

So carnivorous was their appetite toward vegetation, nothing in their path escaped destruction. There was little they would not eat when their favorite foods had been devoured. Their favorite preference was of corn crops and the heads of young wheat and juicy stems of cotton plants. When grain and vegetables were consumed the locust ate the weeds, grasses and stripping of leaves from trees and finally turning on each other they ate one another for dessert. So massive the noise produced by several million tiny flying, chewing creatures was audible for considerable distance.

From the onset the Plainsmen conjured up numerous techniques to attempt to rid themselves of the pestilence. Nothing seemed to make much of a measurable effect. They tried to squash them, trap them, bury them, burn them, asphyxiate and poison them with no success.

Suddenly in the spring of 1878 they nearly all disappeared for no explainable reason. Scientist's explanation evolved around climactic conditions. They stated that in some cases the female locust if climactic conditions were ideal would lay three to four batches of eggs, but if winters were severe and summers were not ideal she may lay only one single deposit and call it a summer.

As an explanation as to the widespread destruction of an insect they pointed out that while the grasshopper is basically considered a walking or hopping insect they also were able to fly short distances. In the course of one days time the grasshopper or locust was constantly in motion, hopping thousands of times if not millions of times a day. The strong summer winds of the plain states and with no succulent young grain to provide distraction the locust could sometimes fly nearly 200 miles a day with help from the winds.

The question then left unanswered remains. Will we ever experience another plague of locust? With present day science and insecticides, it is possible but controllable. That is to say unless the Lord decides he once again wants to get our attention as he did with the people of Egypt.

Resources: Daviess County Museum, Carnegie Public Library

E-mail: doncosby@att.net

The Washington Times-Herald P.O Box 471 Washington, IN 47501

